



# Representative John Turner

## District 114 | Email Update | March 27, 2020

**Date:** March 27, 2020  
**Subject:** District 114 COVID-19 and Tornado Recovery Updates

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Friends and neighbors,

I wish you well as we continue to adjust to the dramatic alteration of our lives from the coronavirus pandemic.

The hardships people are experiencing are real. There are severe effects, like direct health impacts, lost jobs, and struggling small businesses. There are major inconveniences, like not being able to leave home as we normally would. There are emotional effects, like disappointment over canceled events and anxiety about how long these challenges will continue. This virus is impacting us like few things any of us can remember, and it will continue to do so in the months ahead.

As difficult as this period is, I firmly believe we are doing the right thing in Dallas County by continuing our "Stay Home, Stay Safe" measures at the present time. While we all hope to return to a state of normality as soon as possible, the best way to further that goal is to focus now on minimizing the spread of the virus and do all we reasonably can to avoid overwhelming our health care system. How long we will need to keep these measures in place is unknown and it will be reassessed continuously. But the best path to ultimate economic recovery – as well as to saving lives – will be to ensure that the virus is sufficiently contained.

In the meantime, my staff and I are focused on assisting District 114 and our state's response in any way we can. Here are a few things we have been working on this last week:

- I have been on regular calls with my colleagues in the Legislature, state agencies, medical associations, public health authorities, and constituents to assess the current situation and monitor our response.
- We are doing our best to connect constituents with the right people in state government to raise – and if possible, resolve – their specific concerns or issues.
- I have also joined dozens of my colleagues in the House in signing a letter asking the Governor to issue a statewide "Safer at Home" order similar to what we've implemented in Dallas County. My view is that a statewide approach would give Texas the best chance to flatten the curve, not overwhelm our hospitals, and protect Texans.

One other important update: at the time of this writing, the U.S. Congress had just passed a major economic stimulus package responding to the pandemic. It includes direct payments and jobless benefits for many individuals, help for businesses, and assistance to state and local governments. There will be more to say about this legislation in coming weeks. In the meantime, a good initial summary is available here:

<https://www.vox.com/2020/3/27/21196202/house-passes-2-trillion-coronavirus-stimulus-package>

**Tornado Recovery**

For District 114, the coronavirus is our second major disruption in the last six months. Thousands of residents are still recovering from the destruction of the October 20 tornado. In fact, as the entire County shelters in place, many residents of north Dallas who lost their homes last October are doing so in temporary apartments and other housing. Even in the midst of the huge disturbance from the pandemic, we haven't forgotten about the needs related to tornado recovery.

On that front, earlier this month, several other area legislators and I asked the Commissioner of the Texas Department of Insurance to collect certain information from insurance providers about claims in Dallas County related to the tornado. The TDI has conducted similar data calls after other natural disasters such as Hurricanes Harvey, Rita, and Ike. The letter is available [here on my House website](#) under the "Newsletters" tab.

The intent of this request is to understand how the insurance industry has been performing in the wake of the costliest tornado event in Texas history. We also need to understand whether any delays in the claims process might be impeding our recovery. While the timing of this collection effort may now be affected by the coronavirus, we must continue to help our citizens recover from the disaster, and make sure our public policies align with doing so in the most efficient way.

Several other initiatives related to the tornado recovery, including re-planting of trees across north Dallas, are on hold at the moment in light of COVID-19, but will be addressed again as soon as practicable.

If I, or my office, can be of any assistance regarding coronavirus disruptions, tornado recovery, or any other issue related to state government, please don't hesitate to contact us. Our information is below.

I wish you and your family the best during these extraordinary times. This is not the first time our country or our state has been asked to rise to a major challenge. Thank you for what you are doing, each in your own way, to help us overcome this one.

Sincerely,

John Turner  
State Representative  
House District 114

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